1: Karsten--108 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
438 (1928-29)

"The principal hunting weapon of the Indians is the blowgun (umi, in the Quichua language pucuna) which is made with very great care. The making of blowguns has become a special industry which is developed among only a few Jibaro tribes, and in these is followed by only a few individuals. Thus I myself found that only the tribe at the Arapicos and the Achuares at the central Pastaza were makers of blowguns, with which a trade was carried on with other tribes."

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[278]

Stalking is the chief hunting technique, both for arboreal and ground-dwelling creatures. Monkeys and large birds are usually stalked with the blowgun (see Plate 8) and darts poisoned with curare (unpoisoned darts suffice for small birds). A poisoned dart is notched around its tip so that it will break off if a monkey tries to remove it. The hunter, usually alone, but sometimes with a male companion, waits until the monkeys are calling among themselves before stepping stealthily to the base of the monkeys' tree and blowing. The maximum effective range of the blowgun rarely exceeds 100 feet, but the silence of the weapon often permits the hunter to shoot several individuals before the troop becomes alarmed and swings off through the trees. The shot monkeys drop from the trees within a few minutes. The blowgun is not considered satisfactory for hunting ground-dwelling creatures, which are killed instead with shotguns and old Winchester .44 carbines, loaded either with shot or, rarely, in the case of the latter weapon, with bullets. Shy birds, such as the toucan, are hunted more with firearms than with the shorter-range blowgun.

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[438]
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The blowguns and curare dart poison are obtained almost entirely by trade from the Achuara, the Jívaro acknowledging themselves to be inferior blowgun makers and stating that they do not possess the right plants in their region to produce first-rate poison. The blowguns themselves are about seven feet long and made of a single piece of chonta palm which has been split down its length into two pieces which are grooved with great precision and bound together with fiber strips cemented into place with a black beeswax coating.

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Blowgun darts are easily made, in a fraction of a minute, by whittling the slender ribs of ivory nut palm leaves. In hunting, the darts are carried in a quiver around the neck or

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beer making, while shorter ones store the water with which the men rinse their mouths upon arising and after eating. Other gourds are cut in half and perforated to serve as sieves in straining manioc fibers out of the beer. Tree gourds are used by men as canteens for carrying the thick beer mash when hunting or traveling far.

Three kinds of baskets are made, all by the men: a plaited openwork basket used primarily for carrying and storing food; a wickerwork type for carrying fish; and a relatively insect-proof plaited and double-walled basket with a banana leaf lining and a cover for storing featherwork and other personal effects. Matting is unknown.

Virtually every adult male possesses at least one firearm for hunting and fighting. While there are a few ancient Winchester .44 carbines obtained from the Achuara, almost all the guns are Spanish-made muzzle-loading shotguns of recent manufacture secured primarily from trading partners dwelling in the region of white contact in the Río Upano Valley.

Most of the Winchester carbines, although originally pump-action weapons, are so worn that they can function only as single-shot weapons. For fighting, they are loaded with highly valued .44 pistol cartridges obtained through native trading partners from the Achuara, who in turn secure the cartridges from other trading partners in Peru. For hunting, the cartridges are simply reloaded with black powder and shot, and the cartridge primer is replaced with the type used on muzzle-loading shotguns.

The shotguns, percussion-cap weapons usually with a 20-gauge bore, are much preferred over the Winchesters for hunting and also are much more plentiful throughout the tribe due to their steady acquisition by means of the native trading partnerships. They are loaded with black powder

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and iron shot of assorted sizes obtained from the frontier Jívaro, or loaded with the hard seeds of the *etsa* tree, or even river gravel, when iron shot cannot be obtained.

Fighting is rarely done with weapons other than firearms, but occasionally a man kills an enemy from ambush with a plain palm lance or a "shotgun" lance to demonstrate his valor. The "shotgun" lance has a tip made by chopping off the barrel of a worn-out shotgun with a machete, beating the base of the barrel into a point, and inserting a palm-wood shaft into the muzzle end of the barrel. A few old men also carry lances with iron tips obtained years ago by trade from Gualaquiza. Some of these older men also have crude wooden shields in their houses for use in the *tsantsa* feast ritual. Machetes and the less common trade knives are also sometimes employed as fighting weapons.

Men stretch and dry skins of wild boar, jaguar, ocelot, and other felines for trade. Monkey hides are used for making men's shoulder bags. Both sexes manufacture thread, string, and braided rope. Thread is made from the inner bark of the *tsaké* tree, and string from the inner bark of the *kumaí* palm. Men's shoulder bags of knotted and knotless netting are made of this inner bark string using large bone needles.

Weaving, done in almost all houses, is exclusively a man's task. Men, compared to women in Jívaro society, tend to have much more leisure time, which may help account for the fact that they do the spinning, dyeing, and weaving. When not hunting or clearing forest, a man likes to sit in his end of the house, either quietly alone or conversing with visitors. In either case, spinning and weaving allow him to occupy his hands with a pleasant craft which can be interrupted or picked up again as he desires. The textiles he makes are extremely durable and thus there is usually no urgency attached

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142 9. Jaguar skin being dried for trade to the frontier Jívaro
291 (region between the upper Río Macuma and the upper Río
302 Cangaimi, 1956–57).
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tend to have a higher degree of unity than is normally the case.

The relationship between a trading partner and his neighbors who are not his formal *amigri* is a key aspect of the system. A man becomes an *amigri* not to accumulate and hoard wealth, but to dispense it in his neighborhood, to gain prestige and obligations. The distribution of these goods locally is normally done piecemeal as the trading partner's relatives and others ask him for them. Informants, in saying that a man becomes an *amigri* "so that people will like him," explicitly recognize that the main purpose of being a trading partner, and of distributing the goods obtained thereby, is to acquire friends. The people who receive goods from a partner become morally obligated to him until they reciprocate with either an equivalent amount of goods or with services, the latter usually in the form of aid in the trading partner's social disputes and feuds. The *amigri* is usually far from upset if his neighbors do not repay him immediately, for the longer they delay in repayment, the longer period of time they are obligated to him. A trading partner is also likely to be aided by his neighbors in disputes for the additional reason that they wish to protect their future source of supply of trade goods. Altogether, although the usual trading partner is not a community leader, he obtains an above average degree of social security in a society, where security is not easily obtained, by exchanging trade goods for friendship and obligations.

These native traders are the chief means whereby the interior Jívaro have acquired significant quantities of machetes, steel axes, and firearms from the frontier of Ecuadorian colonization west of the Cordillera de Cutucú. Chains of native traders also connect the interior Jívaro with the Canelos tribe to the north and with the Achuara Jivaroans

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to the east and southeast. In its total extent, this network of Indian trading partners apparently stretches from the foot of the Andes in the west to near Iquitos on the Amazon in the east, and from the Río Napo in the north to the Río Marañon in the south. Its most complex and intensive manifestations occur in the isolated interior, where the native distribution system is uninterrupted by white traders or colonization.

Trade in the interior involves two kinds of commodities about equally: white-manufactured valuables (*apach kuit*) and Indian-manufactured valuables (*inar kuit*), the latter particularly from the Achuara tribe. The frontier Jivaro west of the Cutucú mountain range, who are in direct contact with the whites at Macas, Sucúa, and other smaller settlements, obtain the Western-manufactured items primarily by engaging in wage labor for the whites. These then are carried over the Cutucú range by means of several different foot trails.

The Achuara people to the east, lacking any such direct source of large quantities of steel cutting tools and guns, have to trade with the interior Jivaro to obtain them. The Achuara, for their part, have a near monopoly on the manufacture of blowguns and curare, and produce feather ornaments which are highly esteemed by the Jivaro. The Achuara also supply various monkeys, parrots, and marmosets, as well as such items as woven kilts, ornamental earsticks, and native beadwork. In addition, they are the sole suppliers of glass beads, which, for an unknown reason, are available in the Peruvian Amazon, but not in the Ecuadorian Oriente. Except for these glass beads and some .44 caliber cartridges, Achuara trade in items from Peru is severely limited, apparently because the only native-produced goods in which the Peruvians are interested are jaguar, ocelot, and especially peccary hides. The geographical isolation of the Achuara

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rules out the possibility of their obtaining Western-manufactured goods by entering into any labor relationship with whites.

The Achuara also rely upon the Jivaro to supply them with much of their salt. The Achuara have access to a distant rock salt deposit of inferior quality on the Rio Marañon far to the south in Peru, but prefer to trade with the Jivaro to secure the purer salt evaporated from two springs in the Cordillera de Cutucú, one near the upper Rio Mangosiza and the other near the Rio Yaupi (see Map 2 and Plate 18).

This system of native traders is composed of pairs of men normally living one to two days' walk apart who visit each other every two and a half to four months. The visiting trading partner, if he comes from the west, i.e., from the white-Jivaro frontier, brings machetes, steel axes, and shotguns. If from the east, he primarily carries Achuara-made products.

These pairs of men, or trading partners, formalize their essentially contractual relationship with a ritual and thereafter address one another in the diminutive as "little friend," i.e., *amiki*. While the term *amigri* is the third person possessive form of *amigri*, from the Spanish word *amigo*, the development and meaning of the relationship is distinctly native.[9] Two men normally decide to become "friends" only after a series of informal visits, during which they may have exchanged small gifts. When they agree to enter into the formalized trading partnership, each spends two or more months collecting goods that are scarce in his future partner's neighborhood. Then one visits the house of the other, a cloth is spread on the dirt floor and the gifts of both parties are placed in two piles on the cloth. Each man kneels

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beside his pile facing the other. Each says, "Take these things," and they embrace. The two men's wives then go through the same ritual, and finally, both men and their wives all embrace each other.

In this first exchange of goods between *amigri*, and also in subsequent exchanges, usually several large baskets of goods are involved. A typical inventory of goods given by the man coming from the east consists of feather ornaments, beads, blowguns, blowgun dart poison, a hunting dog, and a home-woven kilt. The other man, with white man's goods from the west, presents black powder, shot, percussion caps, a machete, knives, and a shotgun.

Following the first exchange, the host says to the other, "I will bring you valuables (*tsai*). You do the same for me." His visitor in turn, says, "When I send word to you, then you come to visit me." Such word, when it is transmitted later, usually is carried by some other visitor between the neighborhoods of the two *amigri*. When the former host (often accompanied by a wife) returns the visit, he receives a most hospitable reception. In fact, trading partners tend to try to outdo one another in their generosity. If one man fed the other much chicken during his earlier visit, his friend may then feel it necessary to kill a pig to supply his guest with even a greater quantity of choice meat. If he has no pig to kill, then at least he insists that his guest and his wife take half of the household's chickens back with them when they return home. The giving of half of one's easily transportable valuables to one's *amigri* is a characteristic feature of the trading partnership.

Amigri are expected to exchange equal amounts of goods with each other, at least over a period of several months, if not in a single transaction. There are standard recognized

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barter "prices" which guide them in this. In the interior region, typical equivalences in trade goods are the following:

Trade Goods from the West	EQUALS	*Trade Goods from the East (Achuara)*
1 pot of salt		1 blowgun
1 pot of salt		1 gourd of blowgun dart poison
1 machete or 1 steel axe-head		1 blowgun
1 single-barrelled muzzle-loading shotgun		1 red toucan feather headband (*tawaspā*)

The precise equivalences of trade goods in the interior region, of course, are not the same as in other parts of the Jívaro territory because of regional differences in the scarcity of various kinds of goods. For example, west of the Cordillera de Cutucú in the frontier zone, the greater quantity of Western-manufactured goods and the lesser supply of Achuara-manufactured goods raises the "prices" which must be paid in the former for the latter.

In actual practice, trading partners do not keep a strict accounting of transactions. Since a variety of valuables is exchanged by two "friends" at one time and since the Jívaro do not value numeration, the exchange is often slightly uneven. In terms of Jivaroan morality, however, it is apparently unthinkable that a "friend" would consistently attempt to take advantage of his partner in such transactions. To do so would jeopardize the continuance of the *amigri* relationship, and possibly the obligation of the host partner to protect the life of his partner against any local enemies.

The *amigri* relationship is viewed as being closer than that

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18. The saline spring from which almost all of the salt used by the interior Jívaro is obtained. Those living within a day or two of the spring boil the water in pots and trade the resultant salt to more distant neighborhoods (near the upper Río Mangosiza in the eastern Cordillera de Cutucú, 1956–57).

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from the frontier Jívaro. These firearms are still being obtained in ever greater numbers.

The development of long-distance chains of trading partners between the interior Jívaro and adjacent tribes is an especially noteworthy change, mainly occurring since the end of the Amazon rubber boom, about 1914–15. The impetus for this development was provided by the fact that the end of the rubber boom found the Achuara tribe, which had been much more involved in the rubber trade than the Jívaro, suddenly cut off from their supply of firearms and ammunition. At the same time, trade between the frontier Jívaro and the whites at Macas and Méndez was beginning to develop significantly, and the Jívaro also wanted Achuara products, particularly blowguns and dart poison. The essential result was that both the Jívaro and the Achuara found it profitable to develop mutual trade. To the former inventory of products traded within the Jívaro tribe, such as salt and machete blade fragments, were added new goods coming from the frontier Jívaro on the west, and the Achuara in the east. The new goods primarily have been firearms, gunpowder, increased quantities of steel cutting tools from the frontier Jívaro, and featherwork, blowguns, and dart poison from the Achuara.

In connection with trading partnerships, a minor ritual has been learned from the Achuara tribe. This is the ceremony in which two men embrace each other, kneeling on a cloth, to formalize a partnership relationship. Previously any contractual ritual was unknown.

The now universal demand among the interior Jívaro for firearms and gunpowder has made the men of every neighborhood extremely dependent on those persons who have trading partners in neighborhoods nearer the regions of white settlement in the west. The intensification of the trading

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digging of foxholes in house floors is a related new development. The construction of double walls behind beds has become common to protect sleepers from assassins attempting to shoot between the palm staves of the house wall at night. The construction of escape tunnels has declined considerably since the lessening of inter-tribal warfare, for their prime function was to provide a means of escaping the wholesale attacks and sieges which only occur in the inter-tribal head-taking raids. Log signal drums are now also relatively rare, due to the adoption of firearms, whose discharge is sufficient in itself to alert neighbors when an attack occurs.

A decline has occurred in the last three or four decades in the numbers of pigs kept, which is ascribed primarily to the fact that *tsantsa* feasts now have become much less frequent due to the lessening of inter-tribal warfare. The raising of pigs was primarily directed towards having a large supply of meat for such feasts. The capturing and taming of wild animals and birds has increased, however, because of the demand for these by Jivaro trading partners to the west, who trade them to the whites of the frontier.

Hunting has become more important as an activity to procure skins and feathers for trade, although there is no indication that such specialized hunting has resulted in an increase of meat consumption in the household. The adoption of firearms has tended to increase the hunters' efficiency in killing rare birds, such as the toucan, which are prized for their plumage and are difficult to stalk at close range. Firearms also have facilitated the hunting of dangerous wild animals for their skins, especially the jaguar and peccary, which were formerly hunted with the lance.

Besides firearms, blowguns and curare dart poison are also utilized for hunting to a greater degree than was the case several decades ago. The intensified use of blowguns has

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178 184 278 411 438 [727] been made possible by the development of trade with the Achuara, who are the main regional producers of blowguns and curare. Formerly, blowguns and curare could only be obtained in small quantities by looting Achuara houses after a successful head-hunting raid.

178 227 438 In the case of fishing, no noticeable trends have occurred except for a very minor increase in the use of hook-and-line technique due to the acquisition of some steel fish hooks by means of the inter-tribal trade network.

178 222 137 Wild food gathering has been marked by a decline in the collection of the formerly important chonta palm fruit. This decline in collection, interestingly enough, is attributed to the introduction of the steel machete, whose efficiency, compared to the stone axe, made it easy for men to chop down chonta palms simply for their edible tips, thereby reducing the number of trees available as regular sources of the hanging clusters of fruit. In other words, the introduction of steel cutting tools, by contributing to the degradation of this wild food resource, decreased rather than increased food obtained from gathering.

178 24 Species of domesticated plants remain unchanged except for two new additions, *papa china* and the onion, introduced by means of trading partners from the frontier Jivaro, who in turn had adopted them from the missionaries and Ecuadorian settlers. None of the aboriginal native crops has been abandoned within the memory of the informants.

[462] The sexual division of labor in agricultural activities is unchanged except for the relatively inconsequential harvesting of the small plantings of red pepper and sugar cane. Formerly, both sexes engaged in harvesting these, whereas now only women do. The decline of male interest in harvesting sugar cane seems to be due to the fact that since the adoption of firearms, blowguns and poisoned darts are rarely used any

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